# Desegregating Boston's Public Housing

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## Abstract

This study examines racial desegregation efforts made by the Boston Housing Authority during the 1970s and 1980s in order to identify policies that housing agencies in the United States can implement to desegregate tenant populations. Investigating desegregation at BHA offers a unique opportunity as it occurred almost simultaneously with the well-documented desegregation of the city's public schools. Central to both is the question of how local agencies respond to mandates from the federal government that are vaguely described and severely underfunded. Further, when it comes to civil rights and racial segregation, is it enough for agencies to ensure equal access or should a more aggressive approach be taken? For BPS, the response was inaction to the point of forced intervention followed by intense protest. The response from BHA was much different. As documented in the BHA archives, the housing authority was in close contact with the federal government, as well as with tenants themselves. Although the process occurred in fits and starts, effective policy and funding control from the federal government ensured BHA's attention, and formalized venues for conversation between BHA and its tenants ensured input in policy decisions. Ultimately, the agency was not able to entirely avoid the violence that plagued BPS desegregation or achieve the goal of total desegregation; but considering larger demographic trends and funding issues, the outcomes have to be considered as positive. Effective enforcement tools from the federal government and the formalized input from tenants are likely the key policy choices that made the difference.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

In 2015, the Supreme Court handed down a ruling in which the Houston Housing Authority was found to have constructed affordable housing units overwhelmingly in minority neighborhoods, and further, that this practice had resulted in the racial segregation of the agency's tenants. Although most Americans likely think of racial segregation and government desegregation programs as something that happened back during the Civil Rights Era, the Houston case illustrates that these are issues still grappled with today. What advice then should policy analysts give to the Houston Housing Authority and any other housing authority that finds itself in a similar situation? Are there any previous desegregation efforts made by a public housing authority that offer lessons? This thesis examines the desegregation program undertaken by the Boston Housing Authority during the late 1970s and early 1980s. In doing so, I hope to identify policies and procedures that United States housing authorities can use going forward.

The desegregation effort of the BHA offers a unique opportunity for studying government led desegregation efforts because it occurred almost simultaneously with the desegregation of Boston's public school system. Boston public school desegregation is vividly remembered for the shocking wave of violence and protest it sparked across the city. This sets a compelling backdrop for an examination of BHA desegregation, because it might be assumed that the two desegregation programs would have resulted in similar reactions: both BHA and BPS desegregation involved the same population of people;

both occurred during roughly the same time period; both involved allocating scarce governmental resources; both impacted primarily low income residents; both centered around the sacred Bostonian neighborhood unit; and both, it was thought, could only be solved through direct government intervention. However, while the events surrounding BPS are now considered one of the defining issues of late 20th century Boston, BHA desegregation has been almost forgotten. Is there a policy lesson to be taken from the entirely different recollections the public has of these two programs?

The evidence and history of Boston's public housing desegregation efforts suggest four possible hypotheses to explain the important differences in the reactions to desegregating the city's schools as opposed to housing. They are: 1) Implementation of public housing desegregation was better designed and more smoothly carried out. 2) Public housing desegregation resulted in less of the widespread violence and protests that became a defining feature of school desegregation. 3) The Boston Housing Authority's public housing desegregation efforts did not actually result in integrated developments. 4) Bostonians simply did not care about public housing in the same way they cared about public schools. A combination of these factors could also be true as they are not mutually exclusive. In order to understand the reactions to housing desegregation I will review: 1) the history of American public housing and the condition of public housing in the 1970s; 2) theories about American public housing and desegregation; and 3) what Boston and BHA's particular situation were and how the city carried out its desegregation efforts.

Two broad themes arise repeatedly in the comparison between BHA and BPS. The first is the issue of what happens when local agencies are directed via broad

mandates from the Federal Government. The second is the question of what exactly agencies should do to address segregation. Taken in combination, agencies in this situation have a difficult task; although they are given explicit instructions that problems must be addressed, the problems themselves are left undefined, tools for addressing them are not provided, and funding is almost entirely nonexistent. How should agencies define segregation? What exactly constitutes an undue racial concentration? What programs should agencies institute to achieve integration? Is it enough to ensure equal access, or should agencies take an active role in moving and placing people? Agencies like BHA and BPS have stepped into this void and filled in the blanks. The differing approaches of BHA and BPS provides just two examples of how local school and housing agencies have responded to these mandates, and these two approaches provide two lessons to the Houston Housing Authority as to how to address the issue of desegregation.

# Chapter 2

## Methods

This thesis will primarily examine the desegregation efforts made at the Boston Housing Authority beginning in the mid 1970s and continuing through the mid 1980s. In order to make a comparison to the simultaneous school desegregation, a discussion of that program will be included; however, it will be brief as the topic has already been covered in detail, including by Richard Formisano's *Boston against Busing,*[1] cited often within this thesis. The focus will instead be on the much less researched BHA program.

The BHA Archives, housed within the larger City of Boston Archives, are the source of primary research for this thesis. To date, the BHA Archives offer a never before examined set of documents that paint a picture of not just the general administration of BHA at the time, but of the larger racial tensions embroiling the city during desegregation. Documents include letters from tenants to BHA administration, letters from BHA administration to tenants, internal memos, annual reports, and special reports conducted by the housing authority, and by others. Although the materials in the archives are generally comprehensive, including things such as hand written notes, they are especially comprehensive in the period after 1979 when BHA was put into court ordered receivership and required to make detailed reports back to the court on a regular basis. BHA archival documents are supplemented with newspaper articles of the time, mostly

[1] Ronald P. Formisano, *Boston against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

from the *Boston Globe* and the *Boston Herald*. I also rely on Jane Roessner's *A Decent Place to Live.*[2] Although it is primarily focused on the Columbia Point (later called Harbor Point) development in Boston's Dorchester neighborhood, it is one of the only major works covering public housing in Boston during the end of the last century, and includes extensive interviews with BHA tenants and staff.

[2] Jane Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live: From Columbia Point to Harbor Point -- A Community History* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000).

# Chapter 3

## Boston Demographics from World War Two to the 1970s

As the issue of public housing is largely about where people live, I include a brief analysis of the larger migrant and residential trends impacting Boston and the United States in the period leading up to and continuing through the housing authority's desegregation effort (roughly 1974-1990). Beginning during World War II, Boston went through a major demographic shift that had a huge impact on both school and public housing desegregation. To a large extent, the population changes within the city during this period reflect similar demographic changes that occurred throughout the United States as southern African-Americans moved into northern cities at the same time as white households increasingly moved into nearby suburbs. Nationally, this migration resulted in neighborhoods that were increasingly both racially and economically segregated. This pattern was strengthened by government agencies with rules and practices that were both explicitly race-based, as well as those that had unintentional race-based outcomes (discussed in more depth below). All of this was especially pronounced in Boston due to the truncated geographic footprint of the city within the larger metropolitan area which made it easier for white households to live in segregated suburbs while still enjoying the benefits of proximity to a major metropolitan downtown.[3]

[3] Formisano, *Boston against Busing*, 13.

During and after World War II, population demographics experienced a major shift, generally called the Great Migration. Beginning during the war, African Americans primarily from the rural South moved to northern cities in search of industrial jobs supporting the war effort. After the war, technological changes within the farming industry greatly reduced the need for labor, and as unemployed farm laborers sought new employment, the migration trend continued. Prior to the war, Boston's minority population made up only 10% of the city and was primarily middle-class. Afterwards, not only was the total percentage of the minority population higher, but the African-American community had a much larger percentage of low-income households. The city's African-American population rose an astonishing 342% to 104,000 between 1940 and 1970.[4] As many of these migrants were unemployed and low-income former farm laborers, many ended up in government-supported housing.

At the same time as the minority population of Boston and many other cities was rising, the percentage of white households was declining. In Boston, this drop was particularly sharp. The percentage of white households dropped 31% between 1940 and 1970. The city's surrounding suburbs gained 1 million people during the 1950s alone, giving the Greater Boston region one of the lowest ratios of residents in the central city to residents in the metropolitan area in the entire United States (.27 for Boston, compared to .46 for Philadelphia and .73 for New York City).[5] By 1970, Boston's population was

[4] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 25.

[5] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 12.

approximately half a million, but its suburbs contained roughly an additional one and a half million, most of whom were residing in overwhelmingly white towns.[6]

Formisano argues that Boston's particularly sharp urban/suburban divide is a function of the city's geography. For many American cities, the geographic limits cover a large percentage of the surrounding area; however, the City of Boston is comprised of only 48.3 square miles. By comparison, Baltimore is 80.9 square miles and Philadelphia is 134.1 square miles. The reason for the discrepancy is historical; while most cities were able to absorb their surrounding suburbs over time, many of Boston's suburbs were politically strong and resisted amalgamation. This has meant that suburbanization has been easier in Boston than in other cities as there are more opportunities for households to move into suburban towns while still remaining close enough to enjoy the benefits (jobs, culture, services, etc.) of proximity to a major metropolitan downtown.

At the same time as Boston's racial makeup was changing, so too were the city's economics. In 1970, Boston had one of the highest costs of living in the US, but with a median family income ranking it 24th out of the country's 30 largest cities.[7] This made Boston particularly susceptible to the recession and stagflation of that decade. Making matters even worse, employers increasingly followed their workers by moving to the suburbs; 66,000 jobs were added to the Route 128 Corridor (the area abutting the city's suburban circumferential highway) from 1958 to 1967, while several thousand jobs were

[6] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 13.

[7] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 14-15.

lost within the city limits.[8] Reflecting the decline of household income, within Boston public schools, 76% of students qualified for subsidized or free lunches during the 1972-1973 school year, and 61% of students came from households at or below the federal poverty level in 1976.[9]

These large-scale demographic changes made desegregation in Boston and across the country difficult. For example, two new elementary schools that opened in 1971 had purposefully been built in racially mixed parts of Dorchester in an active effort to create integrated schools; however, between the time the schools were planned and the time that they opened, the school's neighborhoods had become almost completely African American, and the effort was for nothing.[10] Figure 3 below illustrates exactly how racial demographics within Boston's neighborhoods changed between 1960 and 1970 as many mixed neighborhoods became majority minority and the total number of minority neighborhoods grew. Comparing Figure 3 to Figure 4, which maps BHA's public housing properties, its easy to see the challenge these changes to the population presented to BHA and BPS. As the agencies were attempting to desegregate their tenants and students, the neighborhoods around them were becoming increasingly minority majority and increasingly segregated.

[8] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 12.

[9] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 17.

[10] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 49.

# Chapter 4

## Segregation and the Boston Public School System

Desegregation in the city of Boston's public school system set off a shocking wave of protest and violence that tore through the city. To that point in time, Boston had enjoyed a reputation as a progressive hot bed: it was home to world famous universities; it had been a center for Abolitionism; and it had raised the all African-American 54th Regiment during the Civil War. However, the 1974 ruling that held the Boston School Committee responsible for maintaining a deliberately segregated school system, and the imposed system of forced busing the ruling created, exposed long dormant tensions that lay just beneath Boston's shiny veneer. The city was in a state of chaos as State Troopers were called in to protect bused children from rock throwing mobs. The entire episode was so divisive that even today, long after the violence has dissipated, the city is still debating issues like school assignment policy and dealing with the fallout from this bad piece of its history.

Nationally, racial segregation within public schools was outlawed by the 1954 Supreme Court ruling in *Brown vs the Board of Education*; however, enforcement, policies, and programs addressing racial imbalance were slow to come. This was the case even as racial attitudes nationwide changed over time, and as the idea of racial integration

became more widely embraced.[11] One of the main reasons for the slow response was the unclear mandate from the Federal Government as to what exactly local governments should do to address the Brown ruling. In Boston and many other cities, this lack of clarity created a vacuum into which stepped a series of local politicians who were able to capitalize on the issue as they rose to power. Particularly in Boston, these politicians were able to delay action on desegregation within the school system for years until higher governmental powers finally were able to intervene. For Boston, it was the state court that ultimately stepped in by mandating the forced busing program.

Formisano points to a number of questions regarding desegregation that still lingered after the Brown ruling.[12] Chief among them was the question of whether schools were required to achieve a racially balanced student body or were they required only to provide equal access? Clouding the issue further, although the 1964 Civil Rights Act required that color blindness be incorporated in policies for schools receiving federal money, actively tracking racial data became the main tool for tracking the pace of integration. In the state of Massachusetts, the Racial Imbalance Act of 1965 explicitly required all public schools in the commonwealth to track and report on the racial makeup of their student body.

In Boston, the unclear mandate from the Federal Government combined with political leaders who were actively opposed to integration to create an environment of

[11] Lawrence Bobo, Howard Schuman, and Charlotte Steeh, "Changing Racial Attitudes toward Residential Integration," in *Housing Desegregation and Federal Policy*, ed. John M. Goering (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,1986).

[12] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 19.

political inertia. Leaders actively looking for solutions debated options such as a restructuring of the school committee, an expansion of the city-wide transfer program, and an expansion of the METCO program (by which students were bussed outside of Boston to suburban schools).[13] Meanwhile, leaders actively opposed to desegregation were left to strengthen their coalition. Ultimately, this inertia resulted in the court system forcing a program onto the school system that neither side supported or had any hand in formulating.

[13] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 72.

# Chapter 5

## Segregation in Public and Private Housing

By the time the Boston Housing Authority began its desegregation efforts in the 1970s, the city of Boston, as well as the entire United States, had faced a long-term entrenchment of racial segregation in the housing market. This occurred not only in public housing, but in the general residential market as well. In many instances, segregation was explicitly the letter of the law. In others, government policies had unexpected consequences that either caused or perpetuated segregation. This has made desegregation a difficult task in the United States because, even though (similarly to school desegregation) public opinion has grown to embrace housing desegregation, the long-term patterns already in place have made results hard to achieve.

Before the Civil Rights Era, racial segregation in the general housing market was common. Many landlords and home sellers attached racially restrictive housing covenants to their properties to exclude minority residents. Similarly, redlining, a practice by which lenders would literally draw a red line to indicate where they would not make home loans to minority households, was common. These and similar practices were accepted as the norm and entirely legal in many places. Even within the federal government, many housing programs were explicitly segregationist. The early underwriting manual used by the Federal Housing Administration covering home loans required that housing be built to be racially homogenous, a practice that more or less

required racially restrictive housing covenants and redlining.[14] The FHA also followed lending policies that made receiving home loans tougher for African-American households than their white counterparts. This in turn helped to spur the migration of white households to the suburbs discussed above, and all but ensured that minority households could not follow.[15]

Within public housing specifically, racial segregation has a long and difficult history. For the most part, segregation within public housing has reflected the segregation of society at large,[16] but with the addition of some of its own unique problems. Early in the federal public housing program, developments built to accommodate industrial workers during WWII were explicitly segregated.[17] Site selection for public housing construction has been particularly problematic as the decentralization of responsibility for selecting sites to local authorities has driven housing developments overwhelmingly towards politically weak minority neighborhoods as local politicians from politically stronger white neighborhoods have blocked construction rather than face backlash from their constituents.[18] The city of Chicago went so far as to formalize this process by giving

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[14] Arnold Hirsch, "Choosing Segregation: Federal Housing Policy between Shelley and Brown," in *From Tenements to the Taylor Homes,* ed. John F. Bauman, Roger Biles, and Kristin M. Szylvian (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 208-209.

[15] Hirsch, "Choosing Segregation," 209.

[16] R. Allen Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing: Ideology and Change in Public Policy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1995) 132.

[17] Kristin M. Szylvian, "The Federal Housing Program During World War II," in *From Tenements to the Taylor Homes,* ed. John F. Bauman, Roger Biles, and Kristin M. Szylvian (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 129.

[18] Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing,* 92.

City Councilors de facto veto power over public housing construction within their wards. This practice resulted in almost all public housing units within the city being constructed in minority neighborhoods.[19]

The legal and programmatic framework creating housing segregation began to change during the Civil Rights Era as public opinion came to embrace the concept of desegregation[20] and political leaders responded accordingly. Democratic leaders during the Kennedy and Johnson administrations increasing saw urban Africa Americans as an important part of a winning electoral coalition, and in response, moved to embrace the issues raised during the Civil Rights Era, housing segregation among them.[21] Hayes identifies a number of early legislation and rule changes as important: first, a relaxing of mortgage underwriting criteria by the FHA in an effort to provide more home loans to residents in inner city neighborhoods (a change later codified in the Housing Act of 1968); and second, the expansion of the government-backed mortgage insurance program to cover rental housing via legislation in 1961 (expanded again in 1968).[22] In 1964, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act banned segregation in all federally assisted housing. In 1966, the city of Chicago lost a suit over the site selection policy discussed above. Similarly, the cities of Lackawanna, Pennsylvania and Black Jack, Missouri were also both successfully sued for excluding public housing from middle class white neighborhoods.

[19] Frederick A. Lazin, "Federal Low-Income Housing Assistance Programs and Racial Segregation: Leased Public Housing," *Public Policy 24* Summer 1976, 337-60.

[20] Bobo, Schuman, and Steeh, "Changing Racial Attitudes Toward Residential Integration."

[21] Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: Functions of Public Welfare* (New York City: Pantheon Books, 1971).

[22] Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing.*

In 1968, Congress passed the Fair Housing Act. In *Shannon vs. HUD*, the court directed the Office of Housing and Urban Development to take the racial and economic composition of neighborhoods into account when making site selections for public housing, and to not worsen existing racial and economic segregation. Responding to these cases and other similar pressure, in 1971, President Nixon ordered HUD to actively promote equal housing opportunity.[23]

Even with legal protection and growing acceptance however, actual enforcement of fair housing was slow to evolve over time. The FHA especially was slow to respond. Racially restrictive housing covenants had been outlawed in 1948 via the Supreme Court's ruling in *Shelley vs. Kramer*, but enforcement of the ruling was almost non-existent within the FHA as officials at the time claimed the ruling did not apply to them.[24] After the *Brown* ruling in 1954, a prominent FHA official was fired for merely raising the idea that the Brown ruling's invalidation of "separate but equal" might apply to public housing. [25] Even after the agency was directed to end its segregationist policies, the FHA still conducted business with home builders who explicitly would not rent or sell to minorities.[26] Outside of the FHA, enforcement was equally difficult. In 1962, President Kennedy signed an executive order mandating the prevention of segregation in federally subsidized housing; however, the order was written to only cover new construction, and

[23] Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing,* 132.

[24] Hirsch, "Choosing Segregation," 207-214.

[25] Hirsch, "Choosing Segregation," 220.

[26] Gail Radford, "The Federal Government and Housing During the Great Depression," in *From Tenements to the Taylor Homes,* ed. John F. Bauman, Roger Biles, and Kristin M. Szylvian (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 115.

compliance was found by HUD to be erratic.[27] The Civil Rights Act of 1968 had codified non-discrimination in housing, but it too proved an ineffective enforcement tool.[28] After Kennedy and Johnson, the Nixon and Ford administrations were reluctant to bring cases to the courts under the 1968 Act, and enforcement only became nominally stronger under President Carter.[29] It was not until 1974 that the Housing Act of that year finally gave the federal government an effective enforcement tool by tying fair housing compliance to the disbursement of Community Development Block Grant funds (described in more detail below).

In addition to the problems discussed above, the public housing program has had a particularly tough time dealing with segregation due to the fact that many of its seemingly race-neutral rules and policies have had unexpected consequences either leading to or furthering racial segregation.[30] Even as the legal and programmatic framework that explicitly created segregated housing has eroded, public housing segregation has continued in part because these issues are harder to identify and correct. In particular, the federal legislation that created most public housing in the United States was tied to slum clearance in the Housing Act of 1949. The combination happened for two reasons. The first was that politicians, looking for expediency, could tie two seemingly great ideas together; horrible slums could be torn down and new public

[27] Roger Biles, "Public Housing and the Postwar Urban Renaissance, 1949-1973," in *From Tenements to the Taylor Homes,* ed. John F. Bauman, Roger Biles, and Kristin M. Szylvian (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 151.

[28] Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing,* 261.

[29] Charles M. Lamb, "Fair Housing Implementation from Nixon to Reagan." Robert A LaFollette Institute of Public Affairs, Working Paper Number 11. Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1992.

[30] Hirsch, "Choosing Segregation," 206-226.

housing developments could be built in their place. The second was that including slum clearance broadened the coalition of supporters for housing legislation to include business groups, big city mayors, bankers, and builders looking to revive struggling downtowns.[31] What politicians did not account for, however, was that politically weak minority neighborhoods would fall victim to clearance more often than their white counterparts. Furthermore, the 1949 Act's mandate that housing developments maintain existing neighborhood racial make-up led formerly mixed but majority minority (and mixed but majority low income) neighborhoods to become extreme concentrations of poor minorities. Even though, like most explicitly segregationist law, that provision too was eventually abandoned, a self-sustaining pattern had been created.

The public's changing opinion of racial segregation presents another issue for desegregation. As mentioned above, between the 1950s and 1980s, the general concept of racial integration was embraced by an increasingly large percentage of the population.[32] The issue remained, however, that the general public's acceptance of any given desegregation plan was generally found to be low. Within public housing projects specifically, white respondents on average were more likely to accept minority residents moving to their development than they were to accept being moved to a development that was majority minority. Furthermore, white households were more willing to accept voluntary programs over enforced programs. Researchers also found that views on the

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[31] Biles, "Public Housing and the Postwar Urban Renaissance," 144.

[32] Bobo, Schuman, and Steeh, "Changing Racial Attitudes Toward Residential Integration," 152-170.

subject were complex and went beyond simple support or non-support for desegregation. Simply put, although Americans had come to support housing desegregation, the way they wanted to accomplish it was still up for debate.

For desegregation in Boston, these national sentiments ran up against a city with many unique issues. With regards to the school system, Boston's particular desegregation tension often fell along racial lines; however, race was not the only or even largest cause of the city's problems, and it was likely the additional factors unique to Boston that made the city's school desegregation more volatile than school desegregation in other cities.[33] To a large extent, Boston's tension surrounding desegregation mirrored the tension around the country during the 1970s centered on white working-class backlash against the Civil Rights Movement, the New Deal, and the Democratic Party, and the public's growing embrace of emerging Republican conservative ideology.[34] Boston's tension added a dangerous mix of ethnicity, religion, class, and a sense of "turf" on top. In particular, the city had a long and troublesome history of the political process being dominated by a patronage-based system, with select insider groups (first the old Yankee families, and later the Irish) benefiting at the expense of others (first the Irish and later African Americans and other minority groups). Exacerbating issues, patronage had led Bostonians to feel that political problems were not solved through the legal system or via agency programs and policies, but by organization, argument, and coalition building. As

[33] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 222-239.

[34] For an in-depth discussion, see the following; Jefferson Cowie. *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class*. New York City: the New Press, 2010; and Bruce J. Schulman, *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2002.

an example, many of the strongest anti-busing neighborhoods in Boston during the 1970s had just gone through battles with the City, State, and Federal Government over urban renewal. The fight over slum clearance, highway construction, and public housing construction had strengthened Bostonian's sense of turf, and enforced in their minds the idea that turf needed protection.

# Chapter 6

## The General State of the Federal Public Housing Program and the Boston Housing Authority prior to and throughout the 1970s

At the start of the 1970s, the Boston Housing Authority was one of the largest housing authorities in the United States and one of the largest government agencies in the City of Boston. The 1970 annual report published by the BHA lists approximately 98,000 people living in assisted housing. That number represents about 10% of the total population of the city at the time.

As to whether or not racial tension existed in Boston's public housing prior to desegregation, reports are varied. In 1962, the *Boston Globe* interviewed tenants at Columbia Point in the Dorchester neighborhood and received mixed answers.[35] One interviewee described tensions between African American and white tenants, as well as tensions between the primarily middle-class African Americans native to Boston and the lower income African Americans who had recently arrived from the South. Another tenant contended that relations were generally good, and still another pointed to tenant clubs at Columbia Point as, "the best integrated I've ever seen." The *Globe* article also describes efforts by tenants to close a nearby garbage dump as "a study in interracial harmony." The paper elaborates,

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[35] Richard L. Hurt, "Columbia Point I. 6000 Isolated on 'Island' – in Heart of Hub," *Boston Globe*, September 9, 1962.

> When it was necessary for the mothers to attend a hearing at the State house on the closing of the dumps, Negro mothers babysat with white children and white mothers reciprocated.

During that period, of the 1504 households at Columbia Point, 209 (14%) were African American, approximately the same percentage as BHA's properties as a whole.[36]

Leading up to desegregation, a number of changes outside of the hands of BHA and its tenants had a major impact on the quality of life within BHA properties. The first was a change in the way the Federal Government viewed and administered the public housing program. The second was a major decline in the amount of funding public housing agencies received, both via the Federal Government and their own rent collection. The third was the changing demographics of the city discussed above resulting in an influx of low-income African-American households into BHA properties. These factors combined in a way that left BHA's properties in dire straights by the time the agency was attempting to desegregate.

## Policy Changes within the Federal Government

The Federal Government's policy changes revolved around two principles: first, that public housing programs should focus their scarce resources on provide housing of last resort; and second, that tenants' right to privacy had not been given enough weight in

[36] Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live*, 184-185.

policy decisions. As well intentioned as these policies were, in practice, the way they were implemented resulted in multiple unforeseen negative outcomes.

As originally envisioned in the Housing Acts of 1937 and 1949, the public housing program provided housing assistance either to households experiencing temporary economic trouble due to the Depression or to households of industrial workers moving to areas experiencing housing shortages due to mobilization for WWII .[37] Housing built by the Public Works Administration during the Depression accepted any household regardless of income.[38] Federally subsidized housing was also used to serve the huge number of veterans returning from WWII as they swelled populations and created housing shortages across the country, and public housing served the same role again during and after the Korean Conflict.[39] In those early days, BHA followed strict screening procedures for accepting tenants, and BHA property managers were empowered to mediate conflicts between residents and evict problem households.[40] Nationally, some housing authorities even went so far as to enforce policies on pets, visitors, the amount and arrangement of furniture in a unit, and the color paint tenants could use.[41] Although these policies were often draconian, combined with the lack of income means testing, the result at the time was a tenant population comprised of

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[37] Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing,* 94.

[38] Radford, "The Federal Government and Housing During the Great Depression," 105.

[39] Szylvian, "The Federal Housing Program During World War II," 133.

[40] Gilbert Y. Steiner, *The State of Welfare* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1971).

[41] Biles, "Public Housing and the Postwar Urban Renaissance," 148.

households with a range of income levels who adhered to a strict level of maintenance of their units.

Over time, the focus of the federal government's housing program began to change with regards to the population to be served. For the most part, these changes reflect the differing attitudes of conservatives and liberals within the United States as to the appropriate role that the government should take in the housing market.[42] Liberals have generally believed that the government should take an active role in producing housing to alleviate slums and housing shortages, and that this housing should be open to all income levels. The housing built during the Depression and WWII are examples of programs designed along these lines. Conservatives have generally been wary of government involvement, and they have been fearful that government-provided housing might create inappropriate competition with private business. Overtime, this political push and pull refocused housing programs to focus only on providing housing of last resort to households with the lowest levels of income who would otherwise be homeless.

Regardless of which view point is correct, the change in focus by the Federal Government (and the Office of Housing and Urban Development by extension) had a number of consequences that negatively impacted BHA and other housing agencies. Across the country, new program guidelines were introduced, screening criteria was loosened,[43] and property managers lost their eviction powers.[44] To HUD, if public

[42] For an in-depth discussion of the history of the housing policy debate between liberals and conservatives and its influence on the Federal housing program, see Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing.*

[43] Biles, "Public Housing and the Postwar Urban Renaissance," 152.

housing should only provide a resource for people with nowhere else to go, then screening and eviction would only result in those people becoming homeless. Perhaps ironically in retrospect, HUD's directives were embraced by BHA and its tenants at the time as the agency had increasingly receiving push back from tenants and tenants' rights groups concerning the draconian screening, housekeeping checks, and other oversight not required in the private housing market that were seen as an invasion of privacy unfairly forced on public housing tenants.[45] Although these ideas may have been entirely correct in theory, the problem was that once screening, eviction, and mediation were abandoned, it became impossible for property managers and housing authorities to deal with problem households. As one resident at Columbia Point put it,

> Somewhere along the way, someone from downtown said to the manager at Columbia Point, "You no longer can go in and review a person's housekeeping, tell a person that they can be evicted, demand that they clean the hallways" – all of these rights were taken away from management, and when that happened, you started to see trash in the halls and the busted windows and the door hanging off the hinges.[46]

The ultimate result of these changes was BHA and other housing authorities being asked to serve more households with an increasing number of social problems, while at the same time being given fewer programmatic tools to do so.

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[44] Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live*, 76.

[45] Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing,* 100.

[46] Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live*, 76.

## Declining Operating Budgets

Making matters worse during the 1960s, the entire federal housing program was facing severe financial trouble.[47] During the 1950s and early 1960s, the Federal Government had paid the cost of construction for public housing development, but individual housing agencies were responsible for operating costs that covered things like cleaning, repairs, and modernization.[48] For housing authorities, the main source of funding for operating costs was rent collected from their tenants. This arrangement was not a major issue for housing authorities early on, because the public housing program included a sizable population of middle-class tenants who could be charged high enough rents to cover the needs of the operating budget; however, the situation changed during the 1960s when the amount of rent the BHA and other authorities could take in dropped precipitously.[49] The first issue was that the focus on housing of last resort meant a higher percentage of tenants were low and extremely low income (median income of public housing households dropped 47.1% to 36.9% as a percentage of US median family income between 1961 and 1970,[50] and the percentage of public housing households

[47] Daniel R. Mandekler, *Housing Subsidies in the U.S. and England* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill: 1973) pages 82-83. Also Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live*, 85.

[48] Eugene Meehan, *The Quality of Federal Policymaking: Programmed Failure in Public Housing* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1977) 5-42.

[49] Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing,* 97.

[50] Henry J. Aaron, *Shelter and Subsidies: Who Benefits from Federal Housing Policies?* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institute, 1972) 116.

receiving additional public assistance grew[51]). The second was that inflation during the 1960s and into the 1970s reduced the buying power of the rent money authorities collected.[52] The third issue was that a federal amendment that was passed in 1969 lowered the rent cap housing authorities could charge to 25% of a tenant's income.[53] Fourth and finally, in 1973, President Nixon declared a moratorium on all federal funding for public housing. Although the moratorium was ultimately lifted, the period of zero funding left already cash-strapped agencies reeling. As they did nationwide, these factors combined to decimate the operating budget of the BHA, and in turn, decimate the agency's ability to keep up with cleaning, repair, and modernization of its properties.

For BHA and other housing agencies, these funding issues could not have come at a worse time. It was during this period that many of the original properties constructed under the federal public housing program were reaching the end of the 20-year life cycle that they had been designed for. Many needed repair, maintenance, or upgrading that the BHA had no funding to address. The quality of life within many BHA properties during the late 1960s and early 1970s was dropping at an alarming rate.

[51] Biles, "Public Housing and the Postwar Urban Renaissance," 151.

[52] Mendekler, *Housing Subsidies in the U.S. and England*, 83.

[53] Hayes, *The Federal Government and Urban Housing,* 131.

## Increasing Low-Income Population

Another major factor impacting Boston and the BHA leading up to desegregation was the demographic shift within the city discussed above. Within a few years, many BHA properties that had formerly been majority white or mixed race became majority minority due to the population influx of low-income African-American households and the population loss of white households. Additionally, households of all backgrounds who could afford to move out did so, and increasingly, any incoming white household was assigned by BHA to segregated buildings.

Leading up to BHA's desegregation efforts in the 1970s, all of these factors had resulted in not just the BHA, but also the entire federal public housing program, struggling. Housing agencies were tasked with serving an increasing number of households, an increasing percentage of whom faced severe social problems, while at the same time contending with plummeting federal support and funding from rent collection to address issues with properties requiring a huge amount of maintenance work.

## Declining Quality of Life and the Perez Case

By the start of the 1970s, BHA properties were in a state of major disrepair, with some being so bad that they were almost abandoned completely (30% of all BHA units

were vacant, with 80% of units at Columbia Point vacant[54]). Many of the middle-class households who had moved into public housing during the housing shortage of the 1950s had moved out, and increasingly, any low-income households who could afford to leave did so as well. Ironically, just as the major influx of new residents arrived in Boston, the BHA was forced to leave units vacant because it could not afford to rehabilitate them. Over time, the state of disrepair, nearly deserted corridors, and inability of management to deal with problem households resulted in increasingly poor living conditions, and this in turn led to an increasingly violent environment. In 1979, the *Boston Phoenix* newspaper summed up the condition within BHA's properties at the time by offering this description of Columbia Point:

> In the early 1970s, the Boston Housing Authority stopped providing services to Columbia Point. Garbage was not picked up, windows were not repaired, toilets leaked for three months before they were fixed. Tenants nearly froze in the winter; pipes burst and apartments flooded. People began to leave. Squatters moved into some vacated units, prostitutes into others, and addicts and pushers turned still other apartments into shooting galleries.
>
> Today, Columbia Point is something like a ghost town. Despite a severe housing shortage and a long waiting list for public housing, the BHA has been using its rehabilitation money to board up most of the 1504 units. Only about 350 families and 75 elderly remain where more than 5,000 people once lived.[55]

In a strange parallel to the city's school desegregation, a judge's ruling provided the impetus for change at BHA (even stranger, both judges were named Garrity, although they were not related). In February of 1975, a group of BHA tenants led by Armando

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[54] Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live*, 184.

[55] John Hubner, "A Gem by the Ocean? Last Exit: The Fall and Rise of Columbia Point," *Boston Phoenix*, November 6, 1979.

Perez of the Mission Hill development filed a class action lawsuit against the BHA on behalf of its tenants. Although the suit was not directly related to desegregation, it provided the final push for BHA to begin addressing the problem, and created the framework under which it would occur. Within a month of the suit's filing, judge Paul Garrity ruled that BHA's properties were "not decent, nor are they safe, nor are they in compliance with the provisions of the state sanitary code."[56] The response from BHA openly and bluntly acknowledged that Judge Garrity was correct, with the BHA's chief of Planning and Modernization replying,

> The needs we have in those developments, by HUD's own standards, are enormous. It would cost $150 million to put those projects in shape, and I'm getting $3.5 million a year to deal with that. The way we are trying to handle the older public housing is obsolete. And on top of that, the national commitment to public housing stinks.[57]

Initially, Judge Garrity placed a court-appointed master in charge of ensuring the BHA complied with the court's ruling to implement improvement plans. Finally, in July of 1979, after four more years of litigation and BHA's failure to make sizable improvements to living conditions, Judge Garrity put the BHA into court receivership. This took the BHA out of the City of Boston's control, giving it to the court and their appointed administrator.

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[56] Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live*, 178.

[57] Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live*, 180.

The Perez ruling was the final push for the BHA to address the racial segregation of its tenants. Like many agencies, the BHA had taken little action while the legal framework for desegregation had been slowly building during the Civil Rights Era. Although it had begun to contemplate action after the Housing Act of 1974 finally provided an effective enforcement mechanism, it was the Perez case that finally pushed the BHA out of its bureaucratic morass on the issue of segregation and forced the agency to make major changes.

# Chapter 7

## Design and Implementation of BHA Desegregation

Internal BHA memos illustrate that the agency was beginning to take the issue of segregation seriously after the Housing Act of 1974. HUD had given housing agencies a strict directive to comply with the Fair Housing component of the Act. One BHA memo vividly laid out the federal stance, stating:

> HUD is aggressively pursuing its command to enforce affirmative action requirements. They require initiative, not just reaction. They require programs, not just plans. They require performance, not just promise. Applicants for Federal dollars must demonstrate initiative, programs, and performance to expand opportunities, services, and facilities for minorities, female-headed families, and other segments of the low-income population if they hope to receive funding.[58]

At risk for BHA and other housing authorities were Community Development Block Grants (large chunks of unrestricted money agencies could spend on any of their initiatives) that made up a significant portion of BHA's budget. As the memo outlines, HUD required initiative, programs, and demonstrable performance in enforcing affirmative action from any agency hoping to hold on to its CDBG funding. Without the ability to do so, and without HUD's CDBGs, operating the BHA would be even more impossible than it already was.

The 1974 Housing Act's connection of desegregation programs to CDBG funds gave HUD a strong tool for enforcing fair housing, and in doing so, provided many

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[58] Affirmative Action Requirements for Fair Housing. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

housing authorities with the largest reason to aggressively pursue desegregation programs. However, similarly to questions that still surrounded public schools after the Brown case, what any individual agency's program looked like was left almost completely up in the air. Even exactly what the mandate from HUD encompassed could be problematic to interpret.[59] Desegregation was clear, but should local agencies actively enforce integration or just provide equal opportunity? What should an agency do if it provided equal opportunity but minority families did not take advantage of it? As it was, agencies were required to avoid any program that would create an undue concentration of low-income persons, but what constitutes an undue concentration?

Facing funding cuts if they did not comply with a policy that contained no specific programs attached, it almost seems fortuitous that BHA lost the Perez case and fell under court order to rehabilitate the agency's properties. Rehabilitation would require moving tenants into new apartments while maintenance work was performed on older units. Until that time, households applying to BHA would select three developments into which they would like to move.[60] BHA would then place applicants onto waiting lists for each of the selected developments, and as units became available, select households starting with those who had applied first. The change BHA made after Perez was to give priority waiting list placements to white households agreeing to move into majority minority developments and minority households agreeing to move into majority white

[59] Michael Vernarelli, "Where Should HUD Locate Assisted Housing? The Evolution of Fair Housing Policy," in *Housing Desegregation and Federal Policy*, ed. John M. Goering (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 214-235.

[60] Boston Housing Authority. Annual Report, 1970. Box 1-13. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

developments. This way, rehabilitation moves could be tied to achieving some sort of racial balance. Almost immediately after the ruling, BHA began sending letters to tenant organizations for comment, and in 1977, began the program that the agency labeled "modernization."

Two differences between Boston school and public housing desegregations efforts that stand out are the leadership from BHA officials (under the court appointed master, and later, the receiver), and participation from BHA tenants. Both engaged throughout the 1970s in desegregation issues, and both were also directly engaged with each other. Whether or not those engagements always resulted in positive outcomes is debatable, but the interaction between the agency and the people it served clearly happened in a way that was starkly different from the schools.

Like BHA, the Boston School Committee was well aware of their segregation issue in the early 1970s. However, unlike the housing agency, the school committee did nothing of note to address the problem. Formisano argues that school committee inaction was a direct result of patronage politics.[61] Under the patronage system, lobbying becomes increasingly important as interest groups are pitted against each other to divide scarce resources. The end result is a political culture where participants feel there's no problem that cannot be argued out of. Thus, although Boston school committee members knew they had a problem, they never felt that the Federal Government, the judiciary, or anyone else would force them to do anything that the school committee did not want to do. The end result was a program that was forced on them that they had no input in creating.

[61] Formisano, *Boston against Busing,* 222-239.

The contrast between BHA and the Boston School Committee is puzzling. Why did one group of leaders in the schools avoid the issue and the other in the housing authority actively address it? The casual observer would probably assume that the two groups might fall into the same trap. Both were part of the City of Boston government, and both were comprised primarily of Bostonians all likely possessing the same social norms of the time. It is likely that the key difference between BHA and the school committee was their differing relationships with the Federal Government. BHA was heavily reliant on HUD for funding, had an open channel of communication with them, and had to be responsive to their affirmative action requirements. The school committee had none of those things or experienced them at a negligible level. Furthermore, with the appointment of the court master, leadership of the BHA was completely removed from the City of Boston government.

In addition to official BHA leadership, public housing desegregation efforts also benefited from leadership within the projects themselves. Together with residents, BHA formed the Tenants Policy Council in 1968.[62] Tenants won seats on the BHA board in 1970, and crucially, the 1974 Housing Act had called for the creation of tenant organizations to provide input in project management. Tenants formed voluntary resident patrols at a number of properties in 1974.[63] Perhaps most strikingly, under an experimental program, the tenant organization at Bromley-Heath in Jamaica Plain was itself put in charge of managing the property. This program was generally seen as

[62] Boston Housing Authority. Annual Report, 1973-1974. Box 1-14. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[63] Boston Housing Authority. Annual Report, 1973-1974.

successful by the BHA, with the head of the agency Samuel Thompson writing in the 1973-1974 Annual Report:

> During the past year, the Bromley-Heath Tenant Management Corporation continued to fulfill the expectations of the BHA and other agencies that a community-based tenant organization can perform the management functions of public housing, in some situations more adequately than by use of conventional management models and techniques as was the case when the Development was under the management of the BHA. Confirmation of this judgment is supported by visual examination of the premises, tenant-voiced comparisons of a before-and-after nature, critical cost-benefit analyses of the fiscal and productivity records, and the demonstrated capacity of the community to react constructively and affirmatively to the increasing problems of urban life.[64]

Thus, when BHA was devising desegregation programs, project residents had a pre-existing forum for involvement.

This relationship played out during desegregation implementation. In 1975 when the BHA was determining how to spend its modernization funds at Columbia Point, it wrote directly to the Columbia Point Task Force and Tenants Action Group,[65] and the BHA wrote directly back to them when the modernization plan was finally in place in 1977.[66] In fact, Columbia Point Tenants often communicated with BHA officials about their concerns: residents wrote asking for space to open a Puerto Rican Community

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[64] Boston Housing Authority. Annual Report, 1973-1974.

[65] Columbia Point Task Force and Tenants Action Group. Letter to Tenants. Apr. 23, 1975. Columbia Point. Columbia Point Project File. Box Mass. 2-20. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[66] Roland Burke. Letter to Tenants. July 20, 1977. Columbia Point. Columbia Point Project File. Box Mass. 2-20. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

Center[67]; they wrote asking BHA to hire more Spanish-speaking maintenance staff[68]; and when Mayor White froze them out of discussions over a 1979 redevelopment plan, they wrote to complain about the lack of involvement.[69] It is perhaps related then that, in response to increased drug dealing around the project in 1977, rather than do nothing, the Columbia Point tenants organized into a public watch that they called, "The People's Militia."[70]

East Boston's Maverick development had similar community involvement. Tenants were in communication with the BHA about increased violence due to desegregation and the need for increased communication between tenants and the agency as early as 1975. In August 1976, tenants and the BHA were communicating about a diversionary youth jobs program. Responding to the Maverick tenants, the program was set up and a fulltime director position was established in June of 1978.[71] The tenants had an open line of communication with the BHA, and the BHA had an open line of communication back to Maverick, and perhaps most importantly, the BHA instituted a program at Maverick based on Maverick tenants' input.

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[67]Domingo Soto. Letter to Mary H Thompson. Feb. 8, 1975. Columbia Point. Columbia Point Project File. Box Mass. 2-20. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[68] Domingo Soto. Letter to Mary H Thompson. Feb. 21, 1975. Columbia Point. Columbia Point Project File. Box Mass. 2-20. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[69] Major Issues: Columbia Point. Columbia Point Project File. Box Mass. 2-20. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[70] Bay State Banner Article Clipping. Oct. 10, 1977. Columbia Point Project File. Box Mass. 2-20. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[71] Unknown. June 20, 1978. Maverick Project File. Box Mass. 2-8. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

Similar discussions between tenants and the BHA occurred at the Faneuil development in Boston's Brighton neighborhood. At Faneuil, tenants, the BHA, and a private business came together to create a summer recreational services program for 12-18 year olds.[72] In approving the program, the BHA noted the volatile situation at Faneuil, but lauded everyone involved for working together to create a potential solution. A similar example of collaborative problem solving at Faneuil was the development of a Boy Scout and Explorers troop.[73] In addition to year-round diversionary activities, 15 Scouts from Faneuil were able to participate in summer camp, and an additional 30 to 40 slots were provided for day camps. Not only does the creation of these programs illustrate the level of communication between BHA and its tenants, but more importantly, that BHA leaders were supportive of the dialogue.

[72] Orlando Isaza. Letter to Carol Dillon. July 25, 1980. Faneuil Project File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[73] Mary Thompson. Letter to Orlando Isaza. Faneuil Project File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

# Chapter 8

## Violence

Making an argument that public housing desegregation differed from public school desegregation with regards to resulting violence or lack there of is difficult because both identifying violence surrounding BHA desegregation, and then comparing it to violence surrounding busing, are difficult tasks. Violence over forced busing is easy to see; it resulted in mass protests and widespread disruption that impacted the vast majority of Boston residents in negative ways. It was famously captured in *The Soiling of Old Glory*, the iconic photo of white protestors assaulting a black man with an American flag on City Hall Plaza. By comparison, housing desegregation does not have an iconic photo and did not have the comparable widespread, long-term, and intense protests centered on it. That is not to say desegregation at BHA was non-violent. In fact, Boston's public housing projects were the scene of incredible violence throughout the 1970s. Identifying violence at BHA properties during desegregation efforts is not the main problem however; the problem is separating busing specific violence, desegregation specific violence, and the general sense of lawlessness that permeated BHA properties as they fell into disrepair.

A letter to the BHA from a group of senior citizens at the Franklin Field development in Roxbury exemplifies the general state of life within the city's public housing at the time (unfortunately, although the letter is contained with other materials

from the 1970s, it is not dated). In their letter, the tenants ask BHA to provide them with a 24-hour armed guard.[74] They reported numerous incidents: break-ins were occurring after hours; five televisions, one air conditioner, and 6 cars had been stolen; attempted burglaries had occurred at six additional units; and four people had been recently stabbed, with others reportedly mugged or beaten. None of these incidents are specifically related to desegregation, but like the problems outlined previously at Columbia Point, illustrate what life was like within BHA properties regardless of any additional problems caused by desegregation.

Maverick is a good example of a development with easy-to-identify racial violence centered specifically on the desegregation effort. An internal BHA memo from June 1975 reported on a meeting with BHA officials where residents called for increased agency-tenant communication to tackle rising racial tensions in the project.[75] Taking a survey of Maverick's African-American tenants, the BHA found one family was planning to move and all others were seriously considering it as well.[76] Tenants met again with BHA officials in August 1976 to call for a diversionary program for kids causing trouble around Maverick. [77] To address the problem, a jobs program was put into place that was

[74] Unknown. Letter to Whom it May Concern. A Request for 24 Hour Armed Guard at Franklin Field Senior Citizen's Recreation Hall. Franklin Field Project File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[75] William Tidwell. Letter to Sam Thompson. June, 1975. Maverick Project File. Box Mass 2-8. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[76] Unknown. Notes on Tenants. May 5, 1975. Maverick Project File. Box Mass. 2-8. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[77] Paul Yee. Meeting Report. Maverick Project File. Box Mass. 2-8. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

successful by most accounts; however, despite that effort, Maverick experienced its most violent incident of the desegregation era when the apartment of an African-American family, the Porters, burned down in December of 1978. The family had previously reported to BHA an earlier fire-bombing attempt and that they had faced repeated racial harassment.[78] The Porters sued the BHA claiming the agency had knowingly put them in a dangerous situation by locating them at the contentious Maverick project.[79]

South Boston's Mary Ellen McCormack had similar issues and, like Maverick, tenants were in communication with the BHA over solutions.[80] The McCormack tenants' solution in the spring of 1975 was a youth center. It seemed like a good idea for a development with 707 children under 21, but if the center was ever successful at stemming any actual violence is unclear. A BHA agent's memo requesting an emergency move out of McCormack for an African-American household noted that many others were already moving out, and that those who remained were being targeted for harassment and attacks even if they had had never had a problem previously.[81] When the preferential placement plan went into effect, only one African American, Faith Evans, moved into McCormack. Her stay lasted less than a year, with reports that a friend's car

[78] Memorandum to BHA Administration and Department Heads Re: Production of Documents in the Porter v. City of Boston. Subject File Box: Court Reports. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[79] Paul Yee. Racial Incidents at Maverick. Dec. 1978. Maverick Project File. Box Mass. 2-8. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[80]Carlton Spence. Letter to Leo Donovan. April 8, 1975. Mary Ellen McCormack Project File. Box Mass 2-23. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[81] Unknown. Emergency 2BR Accessible Apt Needed. Mary Ellen McCormack Project File. Box Mass 2-23. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

had been burned, her own car had "Niggers Suck" scratched into the paint, residents had yelled "I hate niggers" at her, and one apartment had posted a sign on its door reading, "Security Guard – please keep Faith Evans far away from apt 431."[82] As outlined in an October 1979 letter to the housing manager, housing and school desegregation were raising tension, and children in the development were beginning to feel that violence was being condoned.[83] The letter closed by reporting that one young McCormack resident had gone so far as to say of the violence against African-American tenants, "we're just practicing on you until the Niggers come," a reference to the wide-spread belief among tenants that move-in preference and forced busing were about to give way to forced relocation.

The impact busing had on worsening racial tensions within BHA properties was similarly echoed within the Charlestown development. Writing in 1982, a senior BHA staffer outlined the grim situation,

> At one time, there were nine black families living at Charlestown. Since that time, eight have relocated. Presently, there are eleven minority families living there; only one of which is black. Discussions with the manager of the development… appear to indicate that the community's reputation for racial hostility is not unfounded. While there is evidence that minorities have historically been victimized in Charlestown, many tenants and community residents point to busing as the lowering of the floodgate of racial animosity and, ultimately, violence. There is little doubt, however, that busing did exacerbate the overall problem. Most of the blacks living at the Charlestown development began to vacate in October 1973, with the last family leaving in February 1976. It was mentioned quite frequently that Daryl Williams was a former resident there.

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[82] Mary Thompson. Letter to Mary Kelly. Jan. 5, 1979. Mary Ellen McCormack Project File. Box Mass 2-23. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[83] Rosemary Jones. Letter to Mary Ellen McCormack Housing Manager. Oct. 10, 1979. Mary Ellen McCormack Project File. Box Mass 2-23. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

> Daryl is a young black Charlestown High ex-football player who was shot by persons firing from the roof of a building in the development. At age 18, Daryl is now a quadriplegic.[84]

Across town in Boston's Brighton neighborhood, the majority white Faneuil development experienced a number of ups and downs during desegregation. Initially, Faneuil was considered by BHA as one of the more stable developments within the city; however, that changed during desegregation. An internal BHA memo (not dated) outlines exactly how bad the situation became at Faneuil,

> [W]e have experienced a disheartening increase in the vacancy rate recently as a direct consequence of episodes of racial violence. We can only look upon this occurrence as a serious setback at the development previously regarded as one of the more stable in the system.[85]

Illustrative of the types of violence occurring at Faneuil, in 1979, an African-American Faneuil mother notified BHA that a group of white 16 year olds had been harassing her family: they had beaten her 9 year old son while he walked to the store; they broke her car windows; they broke her apartment windows; and when BHA attempted to solve the problem by moving her to a new apartment, they came into the new apartment and broke her furniture.[86] Whether or not Faneuil ever returned to normal during desegregation efforts is unclear, but it is perhaps heartening that a BHA interoffice memo in 1981

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[84] Joseph E. Washington. The Charlestown Open Housing Sub-Plan: A Proposal. June 23, 1982. Charlestown Project File. Box Mass. 2-1. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[85] Operations Introduction. Court Reports Subject File Box. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[86] Unknown. Handwritten Note: March 28, 1979. Faneuil Project Files. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

reporting on minority households moving into the Faneuil and Fairmount developments that September stated, "all of the move-ins have been completed without incident."[87]

The majority African American Columbia Point was also the site of racial issues. Tenants wrote to the BHA that tensions were rising in the development over both housing and school desegregation.[88] Residents noted that the situation was particularly bad because the section of North Dorchester that Columbia Point was in had been tied to their historic rivals in majority white South Boston in the busing plan. Making things particularly bad for Columbia Point was the development's location right on the border between the two neighborhoods. Tensions boiled over spectacularly during the summers of 1975 and 1977 as brawls erupted on Carson Beach. The 1977 incident was documented with a front-page article in the *Boston Globe* with an accompanying picture of police separating large groups of beach goers.[89] It is hard to say whether or not housing desegregation prompted the fighting rather than busing as the *Globe* article states. The beach is located almost directly on the border between South Boston and North Dorchester, and it's almost equidistant between Columbia Point and Mary Ellen McCormack. The reporter from *the Globe* notes that many of the African Americans involved were from Columbia Point, but does not similarly include a home neighborhood

[87] Joseph E. Washington. Interoffice Communication to W Henton-Calhoun. September 28, 1981. Fair Housing Task Force Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[88] Major Issues: Columbia Point. Columbia Point Project File. Box Mass. 2-20. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[89] Richard Martin. "Blacks, Whites, Hispanics Skirmish at Carson Beach," *Boston Globe*, July 25, 1977.

for the white participants, making it hard to pinpoint the exact flashpoint for the fighting. It likely could be both housing and school desegregation that caused the fighting.

The Carson Beach fight points to a larger issue in terms of accounting for housing desegregation violence: is it possible to effectively determine what issue caused what incident? Bostonians fighting each other during the 1970s could have had an almost infinite number of variations of feelings about support or opposition for housing and school desegregation. When a report came into Boston Police of a racial disturbance, could it be appropriately attributed to the schools or the public housing? It often was, but it is likely that some attributions got lost in the murky feelings Bostonians had towards both. There were many incidents attributed to both desegregation efforts, but many anti-busing incidents were tinted with feelings about housing desegregation and vice versa. The Carson brawls are a prime example.

By 1980, the BHA had taken the steps to create an internal Civil Rights Division, partially in an effort to address the racial violence within its developments. In outlining the reasoning behind the division's creation, BHA wrote the following in a 1981 report:

> The alarming increase in racial tension and violence within and without BHA developments during the summer of 1980 made it evident that we must design both short-term and long-range strategies to address fair housing and integration goals throughout the Authority.[90]

What is partially glossed over in the report is that BHA at the time already had fair housing and integration goals. However, it is telling that the extent of the violence at

[90] Boston Housing Authority. Second Semi-Annual Report of the Boston Housing Authority to the Suffolk Superior Court, 1980 August 6-1981 February 1. Annual Reports File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

BHA properties was such that BHA felt the need not only to create entirely new strategies, but also to create an entirely new department within the agency, at least partially to address racial tension and violence that the agency itself categorized as alarming.

The one thing that is clear is, if there is one reason Boston's public housing desegregation is not remembered as vividly as school desegregation, it was not lack of violence. Tensions between white and black residents were high throughout the 1970s, and desegregation efforts only made them higher. Perhaps one could make the argument that housing violence was not comparable to busing violence, but that argument gets lost in questions of whether or not we can classify "less violence" as "not enough violence to matter." On the one hand, the harassment that happened at McCormack to Faith Evans was not exactly the same as what happened during busing protests. But on the other, it was clearly violent enough that she moved, as did others in similar situations. Even if we make the argument that housing was less violent, it is clear it was at least violent enough to have a negative impact on tenants' behavior.

One clear difference in violence between busing and public housing desegregation is that busing violence enveloped the entire city whereas public housing desegregation violence was primarily between BHA tenants. Entire neighborhoods with thousands of people were caught up in busing protests. In contrast, the majority of violence over BHA desegregation was played out between individual BHA tenants who were most often neighbors living in the same development. Although it might be logical to conclude that two desegregation efforts during the same time period in the same city would cause

residents to have similar reactions, that is clearly not the case. Bostonians do not appear to have felt that way at all. What then is the reason for the difference in reaction? Citywide, did Bostonians agree with the way BHA implemented desegregation, or perhaps, did the general population just not feel any interest towards it at all? The fact that there was a violent reaction, but that the violence was isolated primarily among BHA tenants seems to suggest that the latter is true.

# Chapter 9

## Did the Boston Housing Authority Program Actually Result in Desegregated Developments?

The one area where it is easy to judge BHA's desegregation plans is by examining the racial distributions the agency was able to achieve. Quantifying the impact of violence or the way programs are implemented can be murky. How much violence is too much? How little community involvement is too little? Looking at hard numbers of how many white and minority households lived in the various BHA properties, as well as how those numbers changed during the agency's desegregation efforts, is easy by comparison. Examining the detailed records BHA maintained should show if the agency was able to make the changes that were the agency's goal.

Unfortunately, the initial statistics do not paint a kind picture for the BHA's programs. By the end of the 1970s, only seven BHA properties were deemed what the agency labeled as having a "substantial racial mix."[91] The term denoted projects that had

> a minority population at least equal proportionately to the proportion of minority residents in the city of Boston and [had] a white population of at least 30 percent.

Three developments (West Newton Street, Faneuil, and Washington Street) fell into the category, Least Racially Imbalanced, meaning,

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[91] Substantial Racial Mix. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

> [D]evelopments which have more than token integration; that is, the white or nonwhite population of the development comprises more than 10 percent but less than 25 percent of the population of the development.[92]

The remaining 20, by far the largest group, were all categorized as racially unbalanced with white or minority tenants representing 0-10% of the project population.[93] Of these, 12 actually had white or minority populations as low as 1% (see figure 2 below). In this regard, it is hard to see what, if any, impacts BHA's desegregation plans had during this period.

BHA itself openly acknowledged the disheartening situation. Writing in 1981, the agency stated in its annual report:

> Since dramatic, visible change is hardly to be expected at this early stage, we have to look to other, less obvious indicators for evidence of progress. And in that, we will find ourselves frustrated.[94]

In fact, BHA viewed these results so poorly that the agency decided to entirely refocus its effort and resources. The attempt to tackle integration at all BHA properties had not resulted in success. The BHA turned its focus instead to at least maintaining racial diversity at developments that were currently diverse.[95]

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[92] Least Racially Imbalanced. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[93] Racially Imbalanced. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[94] Boston Housing Authority. Second Semi-Annual Report of the Boston Housing Authority to the Suffolk Superior Court, 1980 August 6-1981 February 1.

[95] Boston Housing Authority. Second Semi-Annual Report of the Boston Housing Authority to the Suffolk Superior Court, 1980 August 6-1981 February 1.

The data present a slightly more successful picture for BHA when looking at changes to tenant demographics over a longer period of time. An agency report from 1982 pulled the numbers on ten BHA properties and found that the percentage of minority residents in each had gone up.[96] The report did include two points of caution however: first, because three of the developments had been majority minority to begin with (although that at least shows that the refocused effort had worked); and second, because two more properties only raised their minority representation slightly. In terms of bigger picture trends, however, looking at these numbers, three of the developments (Gallivan, South Street, and Washington-Beach) had become clear successes, the general trend seemed to be towards more minority inclusion, and at the very least, it would be hard to argue that minorities were still being excluded from BHA properties.

These two sets of numbers give a slightly cloudier answer than one might get from only looking at the overall numbers. Certainly, the majority of BHA properties were still heavily segregated even after desegregation plans had been implemented. However, the numbers from a handful of projects indicate a trend towards more racial balance within the BHA tenant population. It is very possible the trending numbers are indicative of a program slowly starting to have success against an entrenched problem that should reasonably be expected to take more than five years to fix. It is also very possible that the trending numbers just represent outliers and indicate nothing of significance. In retrospect, with the benefit of knowing the overall demographic trend within the City of

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[96] Non White Population as a Percentage of the Total Population in the Sub Plan Developments. June 30, 1982. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

Boston as the percentage of minority households as risen significantly, it is perhaps amazing that BHA was able to achieve any level of positive trend at all.

There are three problems that the BHA faced in desegregating its housing that suggest the agency's numbers did in fact represent a trend. These problems are all particular to housing desegregation and are all semi-related. Taken together, they made the BHA's task at the time incredibly hard, and they illustrate why a few token trends might point towards longer-term success.

The first problem is related to the demographic issues discussed above. The 1949 Housing Act dictated that housing projects not upset the racial demographics of their neighborhoods. For years, when projects were built, they were promptly filled with tenants who represented the majority racial group of the neighborhood in which they were located. The result was the entrenchment of specific racial communities within neighborhood public housing properties. Looking again at the map of Boston's minority and white neighborhoods (Figures 3), and comparing it to the map showing where BHA's properties are (Figure 4), we can see how this happened. Comparing the two illustrates how BHA housing could become so segregated as it attempts to mirror the make-up of the surrounding community. When the BHA sought to change things during the 1970s, it were presented with segregated residents who, although they might support desegregation, might not necessarily want to move from their home neighborhood where their friends, family, and community were located.

The second problem the BHA faced was the question of what exactly it meant for the agency to be in compliance with HUD's Fair Housing mandate. It was clear a

mandate existed and that compliance was crucial, but whether or not "fair" meant tenants had to be given equal access to housing or that housing had to have equal racial representation amongst its residents was not explicitly stated by the federal government. The seemingly obvious approach BHA could have taken to ensure desegregated properties would have been to take the second definition and forcibly move residents between developments until racial balances were achieved. The preferential move-in and rehabilitation plans BHA ended up using are much more related to the equal opportunity approach. The problem with that though is, unlike with forced moves, BHA was at the whim of its tenants to integrate. What if tenants simply did not want to move?

The third problem the BHA was faced with centers on resident behavior towards changing neighborhood demographics. In his 1986 study of housing desegregation programs, John Yinger found two factors that integration programs generally had to take into account to be successful: first, that low-income minorities would be unlikely to relocate far away from low-skilled jobs; and second, that whites would generally move away from neighborhoods that became majority minority (generally labeled as White Flight).[97] Failure to consider these points could lead to what Yinger labeled "destabilized integration"; either no one would move into a neighborhood or the old population would move out out once the new population arrived. Because of these points, Yinger suggested that integration programs could either be large or small, but never medium. Small programs succeed by identifying white areas unlikely to suffer from flight. Large

[97] John M. Yinger, "On the Possibility of Achieving Racial Integration through Subsidized Housing," in *Housing Desegregation and Federal Policy*, ed. John M. Goering (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,1986), 290-313.

programs succeed by not leaving an area open into which white households could flee. The problem with medium-sized programs according to Yinger is that white flight is still an option. A good desegregation program would begin in targeted receptive white communities close to low-skilled jobs, and move on to larger programs once desegregation was demonstrated to be effective. With this in mind, the slow pace of BHA desegregation does not seem like such a failure. Although Yinger's study came out after the 1970s, it is not unreasonable to think BHA officials understood the benefits of starting small and the consequence of destabilization if desegregation went badly.

Taken together, these three problems mean that public housing desegregation is incredibly difficult: it has to counteract entrenched citywide segregation; it has to overcome reluctance to move; and it has to be done in a way that does not destabilize the entire process. The BHA had to deal with all three of these problems: Boston housing had been segregated for years; BHA programs did not force households to move; and the entire undertaking would have been for nothing if minority and white households would not both stay in areas the agency attempted to desegregate. With this in mind, the trends the BHA reported in 1982 do not look as bleak as the overall numbers, the agency had a huge amount of room for improvement, but it should be able to claim at least a partial success considering the huge hurdles it faced.

The fact remains however that desegregation was still a major issue in Boston well into the 1980s. In 1982, BHA began again developing new plans, this time by creating individual sub-plans for each of its properties. The sub-plans outlined specific move-in guidelines. For example, at Archdale,

> Any departing white household will be replaced with another white household. Vacancies created by the departure of nonwhite households will be filled on the basis of three white families to one nonwhite family.[98]

Public housing desegregation was an issue again in 1987 during that year's mayoral race. Ray Flynn, the eventual winner, included a commitment to desegregation in his platform, claiming that he would start in his home neighborhood of South Boston. Possibly in a reflection of his neighbors' views on BHA desegregation at the time, although Flynn won the mayoral race, he lost his home district. In 1988 and 1998, attempts were again made to desegregate BHA properties in South Boston and Charlestown. BHA described the effort as happening without incident, but also as slow and token.[99]

Why exactly racial demographics in many of BHA's properties continued to be a problem is unclear. Over time, the Mission, Bromley-Heath, and Columbia Point developments all went from predominantly white in the early 1960s to predominantly African American. Additionally, Lenox Street, Mission Hill Extension, and Annunciation became mostly African American.[100] Yinger's theory of destabilized integration appears to apply in these cases; however, it is also a possibility that changing demographics within BHA properties were only a reflection of changing demographics impacting the entire City of Boston as white households increasingly moved out of the city to the

[98] Wanda Henton-Calhoun. Interoffice to Fair Housing Task Force. July 20, 1982. Tenant Services Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[99] Formisano, *Boston Against Busing,* 200.

[100] Roessner, *A Decent Place to Live*, 87.

suburbs, leaving minority households to make up a larger percentage of the overall city population. As discussed above, the evidence for this being the case is strong.

# Chapter 10

# Conclusion

Boston's public housing desegregation in the 1970s might not be as vividly remembered as busing, and the answer as to why it has been largely invisible is likely not just that it lacked the news-making violence or that the effort had a happy ending. Instead, it seems that the difference between schools and housing and the reason housing desegregation is not remembered as well is because desegregating the city's projects was a much murkier story. Whereas busing presented vivid images of government policy gone horribly wrong, and because those images were presented in a way that the public could quickly comprehend, public housing desegregation was a much different story.

The violence in BHA developments was arguably as impactful as busing violence, but it was ultimately very different. Busing riots and protests swept across the city and involved large numbers of people. Outside of the Carson Beach incidents, violence related to housing desegregation was mostly limited to BHA properties, and tended to involve small numbers of the people who lived within those properties fighting with their neighbors. That is not to diminish the impact of violence within BHA by saying that it was small enough as to be negligible, only to say that it was different. Clearly, violence within BHA developments was a major factor impacting tenant's decisions to move in or out of units.

The difference in leadership shown within the city and amongst city residents with relation to housing and school desegregation is a similar example of a clear

difference between the two efforts. Anti-busing demonstrators were led by outspoken larger-than-life politicians in giant protest marches. Housing desegregation was led by BHA bureaucrats and everyday tenants who wrote each other letters and met in small community groups. Again, these groups were as important as their busing counterparts, but hardly a flashy story.

Perhaps most importantly in muddying the water, the results of the two desegregation attempts were different. Busing is still widely considered a colossal failure. Public housing's outcome is slightly different. Although it is hard to determine exactly how effective the BHA's effort was, at the very least the results discussed above show some reason for optimism. That probably cannot be said for the school program.

What ultimately separates public housing and school desegregation is that their stories are very different. Despite both taking place in the same city, during the same era, with the involvement of the same city government, and dealing with similar city resources, they managed to turn out differently in the city's collective memory. Boston busing and the violence that followed have become synonymous with failure, but Boston public housing desegregation cannot be described in such stark detail. Instead, what the city's attempt to desegregate its public housing turned out to be is a story about government and citizens quietly trying to deal with the problems in their lives to gain small amounts of success over issues that can seem insurmountable.

In light of racial segregation once more becoming an issue for government-assisted housing via the Houston Housing Authority ruling from the Supreme Court, it is worthwhile for decision makers to look back at lessons learned from the efforts of the

1970s and 1980s. Because of busing, perhaps the most well-known examples of spectacular desegregation program failure, Boston seems like an obvious place to start; however, in looking at BHA specifically and comparing it to busing, it is unclear if there are any obvious answers for the policy makers of today. Public Housing desegregation in Boston was in many ways comparable to busing. It was often violent, and it never achieved the racial integration goals that were set. Maybe in that sense, the best piece of information BHA's experience can pass down to the housing authorities of today is that they will likely encounter a tough slog through a process that will be contentious and long, and that they should prepare accordingly.

Appendix

Figure 1

Non White Population as a Percentage of the Total Population in the Sub Plan Developments[101]

| Development | 1975* | 1978 | 1980 | As of 6/30/82 | % Change in Non White Population at Sub Plan Developments between 1982 & 1978 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Gallivan** | 37.6 | 50.76 | 53.74 | 52.8 | 2.04 |
| **Mission Hill** | | 97.31 | 95.87 | 98.65 | 1.34 |
| **Archdale** | 57.9 | 67.79 | 64.97 | 70.91 | 3.12 |
| **South St.** | 13 | 32.51 | 39.81 | 43.18 | 10.67 |
| **Faneuil** | 11.8 | 20.54 | 27.94 | 28.28 | 7.74 |
| **Fairmount** | 5.5 | 3.44 | 2.21 | 6.03 | 2.59 |
| **Orient Hgts** | 9 | 7.28 | 6.08 | 9.78 | 2.5 |
| **E Boston** | 13 | 6.85 | 7.25 | 12.18 | 5.33 |
| **S End** | | 88.77 | 89.22 | 89.68 | 0.97 |
| **Wash-Beach** | 30.8 | 39.79 | 41.27 | 48.1 | 8.31 |

*Only Selected Statistics available for 1975

[101] Non White Population as a Percentage of the Total Population in the Sub Plan Developments. June 30, 1982. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

Figure 2

**Substantial Racial Mix**[102]

The term "substantial racial mix" means that the development has a minority population at least equal proportionately to the proportion of minority residents in the city of Boston and has a white population of at least 30 percent.

| | % of Nonwhites |
|---|---|
| **Archdale** | 73% |
| **Bickford St.** | 64% |
| **Commonwealth** | 63% |
| **Amory St.** | 61% |
| **Gallivan Blvd.** | 53% |
| **Washington-Beech** | 43% |
| **South St** | 38% |

**Least Racially Imbalanced**[103]

The term "Least Racially Imbalanced" refers to developments which have more than token integration; that is, the white or nonwhite population of the development comprises more than 10 percent but less than 25 percent of the population of the development.

| | % of Nonwhites |
|---|---|
| **W. Newton St.** | 82% |
| **Faneuil** | 25% |
| **Washington St.** | 17% |

[102] Substantial Racial Mix. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

[103] Least Racially Imbalanced. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

**Racially Imbalanced**[104]

The term "Racially Imbalanced" refers to developments in which the population is less than 10 percent nonwhite or white.

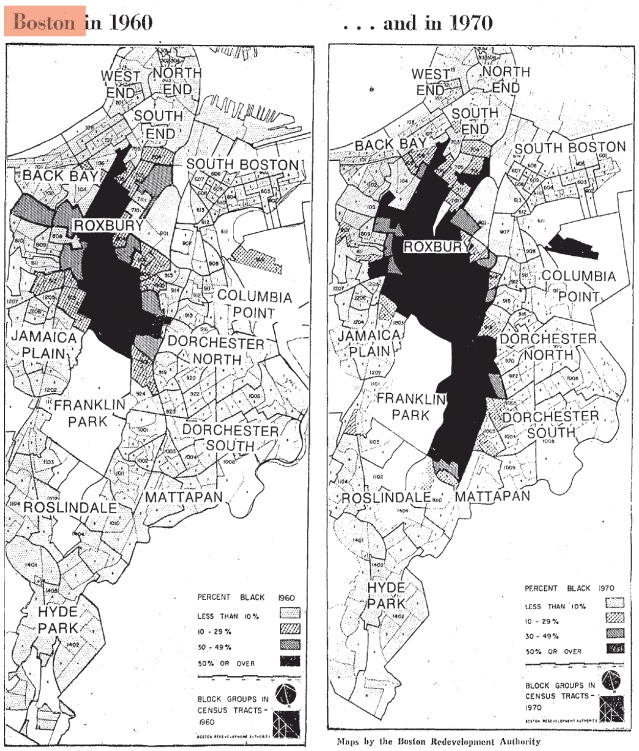
| | % of Nonwhites |
|---|---|
| **Lenox St.** | 99 |
| **Orchard Park** | 99 |
| **Heath St.** | 99 |
| **Franklin Hill** | 99 |
| **Mission Ext.** | 99 |
| **Columbia Pt.** | 99 |
| **Camden St.** | 99 |
| **Franklin Field** | 99 |
| **Whittier St.** | 98 |
| **Mission Hill** | 97 |
| **Bromley Park** | 96 |
| **South End** | 91 |
| **East Boston** | 9 |
| **Summer St.** | 8 |
| **Orient Heights** | 7 |
| **Fairmount** | 3 |
| **M. E. McCormack** | 1 |
| **Old Colony** | 1 |
| **Broadway** | 1 |
| **Charlestown** | 1 |

[104] Racially Imbalanced. Fair Housing Taskforce Subject File. Boston Housing Authority Archives, Boston City Archives, Boston, MA.

Figure 3[105]

## Racial Demographic Changes in the City of Boston between 1960 and 1970

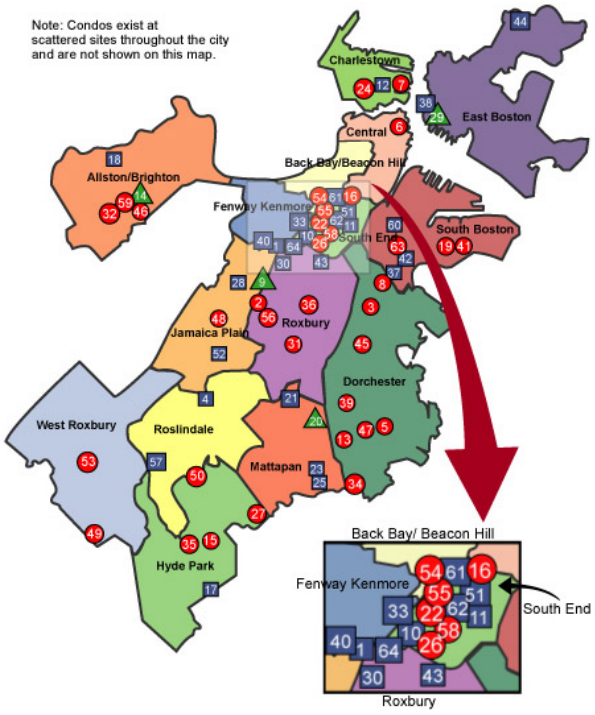
**Boston in 1960: ... and in 1970**
*Boston Globe (1960-1981);* Oct 7, 1973; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Boston Globe (1872-1981)
pg. 21




[105] "Boston in 1960… and in 1970." *Boston Globe*, Oct. 7, 1973.

Figure 4

**Map of Boston Housing Authority Developments**[106]
All symbols indicate location of BHA development




[106] http://www.bostonhousing.org/

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